GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3705
ANSWERED ON:24.03.2017
Killing of Fishermen in Deep Seas
Kamaraaj Dr. K.

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been reports of some Indian fishermen killed by the Sri Lankan Navy off the Tamil Nadu coast;

(b) if so, the details of such incidents reported during the last three years and the current year; and

(c) the welfare and safety measures being taken by the Government for the fishermen in the water between India and Sri Lanka?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (DR. SUBHASH BHAMRE)
IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
????? ????? ?????? (??. ????? ?????)

(a) & (b): There has been no report about killing of any Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan Navy during last three years. However, there are reports about an incident of firing in Palk Bay at around 2230 hrs on 06.03.2017, in which a fishing vessel from Tamil Nadu was fired upon allegedly by the Sri Lankan Navy, leading to the death of an Indian fisherman. The Government of Sri Lanka has denied the involvement of their Navy in the firing incident. In a media statement, the Sri Lanka Navy has pointed out that their patrol boats are not authorized to open fire at any point on Indian fishermen transgressing into the Sri Lankan waters.

(c) Government attaches highest importance to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen. Indian Coast Guard provides assistance to Indian fishermen at sea while they are in distress through regular patrolling. It also conducts Community Interaction Programmes to educate fishermen among other issues, on the perils of cross border fishing. For better accessibility, the Coast Guard has provided a toll free telephone number 1554 for search and rescue assistance to fishermen at sea.

Under operation `Tasha', Indian Navy and Coast Guard ships are deployed continuously (24 x 7) in Palk Bay area to prevent illegal activities and also to protect the Indian fishermen, while they are fishing in Indian waters. Indian Coast Guard have also distributed a total of 1,853 Distress Alert Transmitters (DATs) free of cost to fishermen in the coastal states of India which provide the location of a distressed fisherman to the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre, Chennai.

Whenever any such incidents of attack and consequent detention of our fishermen by the Sri Lankan authorities are reported, Government through diplomatic channels, immediately takes up the matter with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that the Sri Lankan authorities act with restraint and our fishermen are treated in a humane and pragmatic manner and are released expeditiously.
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